



# **SCOTHERN PARISH COUNCIL**

## **Memorial Benches and Trees Policy**

### **1. Introduction**

When loved ones die, their friends and relatives will often want to commemorate them with a lasting memorial. Often this will be in the form of a tree or bench which not only honours their memory but provides a beautiful and functional improvement to the local environment.

This policy sets out how we approve memorial benches and trees; who is responsible for their upkeep; and what is expected from the donor and the Council.

The Council will always endeavour to be respectful, sympathetic, and fair towards those donating trees and benches; to balance the needs of facility users; and to maintain the high quality of its open spaces.

The Council reserves the right to refuse any application which it deems unsuitable. The decision of Scothern Parish Council will be final.

### **2. Locations**

This policy covers areas of land owned or managed by Scothern Parish Council which may be appropriate for a memorial bench or tree.

### **3. Application**

All enquiries & applications for memorial benches/trees should be sent to the clerk of the council either by email or letter.

All memorial benches and trees should be paid for by the applicant before the completion of the installation.

The Parish Council reserves the right to move the location of the bench should the need arise, for purposes such as grounds maintenance or reasons of safety, or for any other purpose deemed reasonable. The bench will be relocated as near to the original location as possible.

The Parish Council will limit the number of memorial benches in particular areas.

The Council will endeavour to accommodate any reasonable requests for the planting of memorial trees or installation of memorial benches on Council-owned property only.

Requests may not be able to be fulfilled if the location is unsuitable due to the risk of vandalism, antisocial behaviour, over-population of trees or benches, or any other material factors.

Only trees and benches suitable, in-keeping to the immediate surrounds, and benches of a robust design will be used. The Council will decide on the style and make of bench.

The Council will supply a list of suitable trees and the appropriate location, as well as the cost, so that the friends or family can choose the one that meets their preference and budget. The Council will decide the size of the tree according to the location it will be planted in.

The exact location of the tree or bench will be agreed with Scothern Council or from the master plan. It is the donor's responsibility to ensure that the location is wellcommunicated to the Council and confirmed in writing, by letter or email, with an accompanying sketch if needed.

The tree or bench is the property of the Council, and the donor does not retain any right to determine its future management. The Council will nevertheless endeavour to ensure it is properly insured, maintained and cared for.

#### 4.Installing/Planting:

The arrangements for ordering will be the applicant's responsibility once agreed with the council (type/design) and installing the bench or tree will be the responsibility of the Council, once the financial payment has been made.

Tree planting will usually only be permitted between late autumn and early spring, in line with the tree-planting season.

Trees will normally be planted by the Parish Council contractor. However, donors are welcome to be present at the tree planting and carry out a small ceremony if they wish.

No scattering of ashes of humans or pets at any site either at the time or a later date will be permitted.

#### 5.Plaques

Commemorative plaques can be affixed to a memorial bench, or placed next to a memorial tree, subject to agreeing a size, wording, and specification with the Council. This will be included in the cost of the bench. No plaque may be affixed to a tree itself.

#### 6.Maintenance

Donors should also be aware that benches or young trees in public areas may be subject to vandalism, and the Council will not be held responsible for any costs in replacing them.

The Council shall endeavour to maintain and care for a memorial tree and bench for as long as possible. However, it reserves the right to re-site or remove any tree or bench that it deems to be unsafe, unrepairable, or other reasons.

No placing of flowers or other objects at memorials will be permitted, except with the permission of the Council.

The donor shall not be permitted to undertake any maintenance of the memorial tree or bench without the permission of the Council.

The content of this policy will be revised as necessary to meet changing circumstances.

Dated: 8<sup>th</sup> May 2024

Approved: mins 148/2024